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ABSTRACT

Abstracts of 28 articles, collected by the Suburban Press Research Center, are provided in this paper. The articles discuss various aspects of the suburban press: pretrial coverage; news coverage for adolescents, the family, and the aged; editorials; education news; business news; crime coverage; consumer information; the formation of policies concerning racial issues; sports coverage; and so on. (KS)

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Suburban Press Research Center

Suburban Press Research Series No. 15, October 1974

Abstracts of Suburban Press Critique Series papers produced by the Suburban Press Research Center from April 1966 to May 1973.

Produced by the Suburban
Press Research Center

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Copies of the original papers abstracted here may be obtained by sending $1.00 for each paper to:

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Please identify the paper you want by series number, title, and author.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 1

PRETRIAL COVERAGE

By Dr. Granville Price

Stories clipped from 46 February and March (1966) issues of newspapers are the basis for this discussion. In analysis, the author found that 10 to 12 papers had no pretrial coverage. The majority was found to carry "safe" coverage.

This article explores various aspects of pretrial coverage. The author cites examples of cases and shows how they were covered by the press. He adds what he considers to be helpful suggestions in coverage of this type of news.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 2

WHO'S ASLEEP WHILE THE TEENS SWITCH?

By Dr. Granville Price

The article discusses the appeal to and effort of suburban newspapers toward attracting the teen audience. Examples of articles taken from "teen departments" in suburban papers are presented. The article concludes with a list of suggestions for improvement.

The author divides the essay into the following six sections, each containing a discussion of that aspect of "teen news," as well as examples of same.

Political Activities
Problem Solving
Depth Reporting
Participation
Combos
Careers

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 3

SUBURBAN FAMILY PAGES

By Dr. Granville Price

Suburban newspapers are feeling their way toward a "society" section that truly reflects and serves the new concept of home life in the suburbs. They are learning that "society" means the complex and evolving nature of suburban life rather than the frumpery that cluttered earlier women's sections in the dailies and country weeklies.

The author contends that there has been a trend in the reporting of family news: Copy has dropped the Victorian sham; emphasis changed to family, home, hobbies, play and activities instead of weddings and clubs.

This type of newspaper writing in suburban papers is discussed along with useful examples under the following headings:

Ubiquitous Brides
Club News
News Features
Department Features
Make-up and Art

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 4

OPINION PAGES

By Dr. Granville Price

A question always is asked about the variety of an editorial page. The author contends that there is variety enough if the editorial page is edited with its first function in mind--that of giving the reader the editor's best judgment on the news and information he brings the reader.

It is the purpose of this critique to explore the means of this most efficient communication, while recognizing that local and historical conditions call for different applications from paper to paper.

Article is divided into the following topics:

What To Write About.
How To Write It.
Typography.
Page Opposite
Rounding Out The Page.

The article concludes with suggestions and recommendations.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 5

FEATURE STORIES

By Dr. Granville Price

Features are one of the main devices for persuading the space buyer that the suburban editor recognizes and serves a need not met for his suburban population by other media.

Aspects of feature writing are discussed under the following topics:

Theme and Focus
Subjects
Display
Treatment and Style

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 6

LET THE SITUATIONER DO THE TALKING

By Dr. Granville Price

A group of researchers set out to find examples of situationers--stories, features and sometimes editorials that round up relevant information on a developing situation--to compile this essay. They did not find an over-abundance of articles.

This fact alone is important for at least two reasons: (1) Many suburban editors state that one of their most serious problems is adequate gathering and display of news concerning affairs that cross a complex of community boundary lines. (2) Political scientists, sociologists, and government agencies feel the public's will may be frustrated by lack of information and communication on such cross-district affairs.

Situationers are a logical device for assembling data, history, and citizen interests in interpretive copy about affairs that cross boundaries. This paper explores situationers with the intent of stimulating comment. Areas covered include:

Overlapping Affairs
Co-operating Government Councils
Examples of Situationers
Editorials

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 7

YOU HAVE BAD WRITING, BAD WRITING

By Dr. Granville Price

The author contends that there is no place in the suburban press for bad writing. Language is the basic tool of the journalistic trade, and we must be true to it.

He adds that the suburban journalist writes for an audience that is, in general, more sophisticated than readers in rural or city areas.

The article consists of a discussion and a series of good writing examples. The author covers such topics as style, syntax and sentence structure.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 8

NO SUBURB IS AN ISLAND

By Dr. Granville Price

The point of this research paper is that suburban newspapers must re-examine their news formulas, add information needed for the orderly development of race attitudes and policy, and learn how to make this information interesting to the reader.

Few suburban newspapers focus on controversial, troublesome issues. They tend to cater to the withdrawal side of the suburbanite personality. Topics covered are as follows:

1. The Massage Is Not The Answer
2. Responsibility of Suburbia to The Core City (Positive Brother)
3. Constructive Copy
4. Merger, Co-operation, and Accommodation
5. Questions Reporters Didn't Ask
6. Raised Eyebrow Department
7. What Can We Do?

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 9

MAKEUP

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique, with accompanying examples, explores preferred types of makeup for suburban newspapers.

Horizontal makeup at first appears to be the logical choice, but it has its dangers. Other approaches also are discussed. Section headings are:

Page One
Tabloid Front Pages
Tabloid Inside Pages
Inside News Pages
Women's Pages
Sports Pages
Opinion Pages

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 10

NEWS OF EDUCATION

By Dr. Granville Price

Understanding develops friendship. Children and education benefit most in communities where members of the press and those of the teaching profession work in close co-operation.

Unfortunately, such is not always the case. This article explores both sides of this problem.

The following criticisms are aired:

Referendums
Meetings
Integration
Publicity
Situationers
Humanizing
Superintendents
Trial Balloons
Letters
Localization

The article concludes with recommendations for improvement.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 11

SPORTS NEWS

by Dr. Granville Price

This paper explores problems encountered in sports writing and reporting. Examples offer potential solutions to problems discussed.

Recommendations are made which may be summarized as follows:

Give time to organizing stringers, then to educating them.
Be able to summarize without losing flavor.
Make display help sell sports.
Crop pix severely to emphasize movement and action.
Edit carefully.
Be consistent on coverage.
Explore recreation that the family enjoys.

Topics covered are broken down into the following areas:

The Problem
Attracting Readers
Editing
Sports Art
The Error Column
Off-Beat Sports

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 12

NEWS OF THE ARTS

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique explores coverage of the arts and amusements in suburban papers.

The contention is that most coverage lacks vigorous, purposive direction. The article further maintains that there is a wealth of opportunity for interesting reporting and reading in this area.

The following areas are covered:

Why do we neglect entertainment and the arts?
Ingredients that will add interest and attract and hold the confidence of readers.
Calendars
Classifications
Columns
Advances
Coverage
Features
Pictures

The article concludes with suggestions for adding interest to art-oriented stories.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 14

LET THERE BE FLAIR

By Dr. Granville Price

This article analyzes "flair" in news writing, and its need to add interest to reading.

Examples of writing with and without a flair are featured. The main body of this paper consists of presentations of these examples.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 15

THE BUSINESS NEWS SYNDROME

By Dr. Granville Price

Suburban newspapers should be doing better with business news than other newspapers; theirs is a fast-growing community with a newness not seen in the city. However, such is not the case. Suburban papers lag. These reasons are put forth as to why:

Lack of a staffer trained in business news.
Fear of the advertiser.
Failure to recognize news significance.
Dependence on public relations representatives.
Insufficient time given to reporting.

The following topics are covered:

What We Should Be Going.
What We Are Doing--Mostly Good.
What We Are Doing--Mostly Bad.

The conclusion presented by Dr. Price is that the primary problem is not good or bad reporting, it is nonreporting.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 16

TOOT THE EDITORIAL HORN

By Dr. Granville Price

Suburban newspapers are not tooting their editorial horns. There's not much proud announcement of news achievement. Readers aren't going to appreciate or make full use of news unless they are told it's good and useful.

This critique emphasizes ways in which the suburban press can create strong editorial spirit. They are:

Promote news.
"Boast" of honors and awards.
Encourage reader participation.
Sponsor projects.
Inform readers of newspaper news.
Report news made by the staff and about the staff.
Introduce the staff.
Tell the reader what the other fellow is doing.

The article concludes with specific suggestions of what can be done.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 17

COVERING THE DRUG SCENE

By Dr. Granville Price

This paper is based on clippings from suburban newspapers. It has the intent of reflecting how these papers treat the drug-abuse problem.

The article uses examples and discussions that illustrate how to attain better coverage.

The following topics are covered:

Busts
Enforcement
News That Warns
Community Programs
Causes

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 18

REACH OUT FOR YOUTH

By Dr. Granville Price

The suburban press lacks credibility with youth. The reasons are twofold:

Moral--Alienation of youth.
Economic--What is the fate of circulation if a large portion of the youth market distrusts newspapers?

The relationship of youth and suburban newspapers is analyzed in this paper. The following suggestions are put forth for improvement of the situation:

Beef up family sections with youth discussions, activities and hobbies, for example.
Cover jobs, employment, unemployment, drug abuse, delinquency, abortion and such subjects.
Cover recreation like it is.
Treat both sides (young and old) of an issue.
Put reporters on the youth beat.
Treat youth opinion with respect.
Report discovery of new truths and pleasures by youths.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 19

SICK TRANSIT SUBURBIA

By Dr. Granville Price

Theme: It is vital that the suburban press anticipate the transit problems of fast-growing suburbia and tell it so interestingly, in terms of people instead of slide rule statistics, that people have the will and the know-how to make metropolitan life livable.

The author contends that suburban papers are not doing so. To present his argument examples, discussions, evaluations, and recommendations are made covering the following areas:

Coping with frustration (need for mass transit).
Busing.
Rail service.
Underpasses.

Suburban Press Research-Critique Series No. 20

THE RELIGION BEAT

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique maintains that more consistent coverage of religion, based on a sound sense of news value, is needed.

Problem: Reporters tend to think of religion in terms of bingo contests and church listings. Religion is changing and the press must be responsive to this change.

The following are areas considered important to the religion beat:

Reporters must be objective.
Coverage must be broad-based and not parochial or confined to a few established institutions.
More than just meetings and sermons must be covered.

The remaining portion consists of examples of how suburban papers cover religion news.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 21

THE NEW NEWS OF CRIME

By Dr. Granville Price

If America's suburban newspapers expect to remain relevant, they will have to discover what is happening on the crime front and find a new way of reporting it. Most suburban newspapers are doing a job that is somewhat less than adequate.

This essay aims for relevancy in suburban newspapers. It discusses day-to-day coverage of crime and suggests ways of making the crime beat more relevant. Examples of the author's contention are cited throughout the text.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 22

THE CONSUMER BEAT

By Dr. Granville Price

The article explores consumerism and its relationship to newspapers. It maintains that consumer news is important to readers, and it therefore deserves the proper coverage.

The author cites examples of various types of consumer news, that to this point have been largely sensational in nature.

Topics covered include:

Government regulation.
Types of consumer news.
Examples of what editors are doing.
Environment.
Safety.
Home and Furnishing.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 23

LAW AND THE SUBURBAN NEWS DESK

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique is based on research by students in the Law of the Press class at Northern Illinois University during the spring of 1972.

Articles cited are examples of both good and bad usage, and are presented as reference and as a basis for discussion.

Topics include:

Freedom of the Press.
Open Meetings.
Access to Records.
Fair Comment.
Trial by Newspaper and Safety Wording.
Error and Retraction.
School Newspapers.
Local Censorship.
Advertising.
Electronic Journalism.
Newsman's Privilege.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 24

SUBURBAN JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

By Dr. Granville Price

The intent of this paper is three-fold:

To suggest and inspire good coverage in all papers.
To give editors criteria for evaluating staff work.
To induce early preparation for contests, both in news assignments and in saving clip sheets.

The critique is based on articles submitted to choose the 1972 Suburban Journalist of the Year.

Summaries are grouped under headings of:

Environment
Education
Social Problems
Humanity
Police and Conflict
Business
Civic
General

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 25

OLD NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique is concerned with news of interest to the aged. The aged are required to make many adjustments. News all too frequently lags behind these adjustments.

There has been considerable coverage of two areas--housing and clubs--and not very much coverage on many problems of concern to and about the aged. A conference of experts who work with aging persons developed this list of services important to senior citizens:

Low income housing.
Health clinics for senior citizens.
Reduced property taxes.
Public housing.
Minibuses.
Full-service hospitals.
Food stamp delivery service.
Multipurpose service centers.
Rent supplements.
Loans and grants for home repair.
Meals on wheels.
Home care services.
Telephone reassurance programs.
Law enforcement services.
Social and recreational services.
Legal aid.
Income and property management.
Continuing education.

It is contended that these areas need more coverage. In this paper the author comments on coverage, suggests how untouched news areas might be developed, and appends a bibliography of sources that will help a staff see and explore news they are not accustomed to treating.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 26

DEPTH SPORTS NEWS--WITH A FLAIR

By Phil Kurth and Dr. Granville Price

This paper is written from a conversation between Price and Phil Kurth, winner of the 1972 Suburban Newspapers of America sportswriting contest.

They discuss Kurth's story, "Where's the Glory Gone?"--a situationer about prep sports. Throughout the conversation, the two discuss various aspects of sports writing and their opinions on improvement.

A critique is offered by Price and his assistant, Julie Greetis. The two cite writing examples of other sportswriters.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 27

FAMILY SERVICES

By Dr. Granville Price

This critique covers related topics dealing with family services and needs. Topics include:

Health needs.
Day care.
Consumer news.
Recreational areas.
Insurance.
Old age.
Death.

The paper maintains that there is too little reporting seeking to mirror the suburban community to its residents in terms of its residents' experiences and feelings; and that there tends to be too much publicizing only of committees or projects. Examples of the above topics are cited for reference.

Suburban Press Research--Critique Series No. 28

WRITING CUTLINES, CAPTIONS, AND LEGENDS

By Dr. Hallie Hamilton

The basic assumption underlying this study is that the purposes of a cutline include providing a frame of reference, adding significance, calling attention to less prominent elements in the visual image, and identification.

These examples are cited for discussion and reference.

Redundancy
Verb Tense
Credibility
Length
Format

Also included are

Steps in writing a cutline.
Know the purpose of the photo.
Study the picture.
Legend, lead-in or opening words.
Proper positioning.